THE

EVIDENCE;

OR,

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RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE THE BASIS OF HUMAN FELICITY.

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THE LIFE OF

THE APOSTLE PAUL.

THE lives of great and eminent men lay open a field for improvement very extensive and inviting. With these we may converse as with living characters, mark the progress of the human mind, its variation according to the state of society, from one period to another, and select those traits from the whole assemblage, which are of no small utility in forming our sentiments and habits, and directing the drift of our pursuit.

BY such an acquaintance with the lives of the great and good, who have gone before us, we have experience without expense of time, way marks to guide our course gratuitously provided, and an aiding hand to conduct us safely to the best end.

TURNING our eye here with strict observance, we may see impending dangers and how they have been avoided; the means which have contributed to human wretchedness and ignominy, and also the path which leads to true honor, felicity and greatness.

IN exhibiting these characters, however, there is great need of caution and candor. To show only the fair side of the picture, misinforms the judgment, and of course give a false impression. The darkside, instead of lying concealed, must be exposed, that from the whole portraiture we may behold the men, just as they were when living and acting, and have similar acquaintance with them, as though they had been our cotemporaries. But alas! we are too often misled by a detached and partial glancing at characters, without taking that complete view, which securing us from prejudice, enriches our minds with the most important information. The Biography of men, had better be unattempted, than maimed and partially handled. Whether the writer has fallen into the above named error in delineating the character of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the gentiles, it is now submitted to the candid reader to judge.

OF all the antient saints, perhaps, no character on the whole, stands higher, if so high, as that of the Apostle Paul. Viewing him as a man, a christian, an Apostle of Christ, and to this add his most profound natural and acquired abilities, his extensive acquaintance with men and things, accompanied with the most polished manners and unrivaled eloquence, he rises superior to any other man of whom sacred or profane history gives an account. To do justice to such a character, is no inconsiderable task.

Saint Paul came on the stage of action, at a very interesting and important period. It was when learning and science were at the highest pitch of improvement. Rome at this time was mistress of the world. The nations round about had become subjugated to her dominion and were now tributary to the full extent of her claims. The Jews about seventy years before the Christian era, had been conquered by the Romans and were now groaning under the burden of their oppressive yoke. With imperious authority their iron hand was laid on every kingdom and republic far and near, and all without resistance yielded to their unbounded control. Hence those who were enrolled Roman citizens by law, were privileged in distinction from others in certain rites, of which each one could avail himself according to his own pleasure. Those thus enrolled were not liable to be tried and condemned, for a crime alledged by any petty governor or prince of a province; but always had the right to appeal to the Roman Emperor. This previlege was not always by right of descent. It was sometimes purchased by large sums of money. St. Paul was a Roman citizen by descent. Tho' he was a Jew by nation, and not naturally entitled to this right, yet his ancestors had some way obtained it, so that it fell to him by heirship. In proof that I am correct, I will refer you to the particular statement, as recorded in these words.— "And as they bound him with thongs Paul said unto the centurion, that stood by, is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned. When the centurion heard that, he went out and told the chief captain, take heed what thou doest for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came and said unto him, tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said yea. And the chief captain answered, with a great sum obtained I this freedom. He was afraid after he knew he was a Roman and because he had bound him." Hence it appears, that St. Paul was of very high and honorable descent, held a rank superior to that of his own nation in general, being enrolled a Roman citizen and having a right to all the privileges and immunities hence resulting.

The place of Paul's nativity was Tarsus, a city of Celicia, and of no inconsiderable note, situated in Asia Minor. Here it is probable he spent his infancy and childhood. No sooner, however, did his surprising genius discover itself, than he was sent to Jerusalem, and while a youth was placed under the tuition of Gamaliel an eminent doctor of Laws, who instructed him in every branch of science requisite to furnish him to fill with dignity the most exalted seat of promotion. He was made acquainted with the various systems of phylosophy then in vogue which were very numerous. This being the *Augustine* age when learning was at its very pinnacle in the Roman Empire, sources of improvement presented themselves suited to all the cravings of ambition, and the most unbounded thirst for glory. Soon he became an adept in Grecian and Roman literature and spoke with ease and accuracy all the different languages of the civilized world. Added to these acquisitions, he was made well acquainted with the laws and religion of his own nation, which was a principal object of his attention. With the different sentiments and sectaries of the Jews, he was perfectly conversant; and at length became settled in opinions of his own, and as he tells us, was a pharisee of the straitest sect. The learned Mosheim, speaking of St. Paul, expresses himself in these

words, "Independently of the gifts, with which he was enriched, he was naturally possessed of an invincible courage, an amazing force of genius and a spirit of patience which no fatigue could overcome, and which no sufferings or trials could exhaust."

SETTLED in his belief, he entered on a life of action in due conformity to the principles he had embraced, and hence we may form an accurate opinion of Paul's religious sentiments previous to his conversion to the Christian faith. The Jews, in the time of Christ and in the apostolic age, were split up into different sects and parties. Of these the pharisees were by far the most numerous and popular. What they believed, and how they practised we are particularly informed. Ostentatious and desirous of human applause, whatever they did was done to be seen of men. Overlooking the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and the love of God, they prided themselves in a show of external sanctity, and made great pretensions to superior attainments in whatever they deemed meritorious. Ignorant of the total depravity existing in the hearts of men naturally, they were blind as to seeing their need of a spiritual deliverer, and were prepared to oppose him in his divine mission and work. Looking for a temporal prince appearing in pomp and splendor, they held in abhorrence the glorious Messiah who declared that his kingdom was not of this world. When Christ offered them salvation through his merits, they disdained the proposal, viewing themselves already free, because they had Abraham to their father. Lost to the sense of their own scriptures, the law and the prophets, they passed by the righteousness of God through the blindness that was in them. "Christ came unto his own; but his own received him not." No sooner did the saviour uncover their hypocricy and expose their guilt, than their hearts rose against him in all the bitterness of reproach and blasphemy. During Christ's ministry and passion, Paul was not an actor; but no sooner did he enter on the theatre of public life, than he embraced all their views and sentiments.

(To be Continued.)

The importance and utility of attentive hearing.

ATTENTION is the great mean of intellectual improvement. No considerable progress can be made in any useful pursuit without attention. In acquiring a knowledge of the arts and sciences, the student is more or less successful in proportion to his application. By attention mankind have arisen to their present state of civilization, and were this to be suspended, they would gradually revert back to their former barbarity and heathenism. To excite men to attend to the common pursuits of life and objects of sense there is little difficulty. They address themselves to the mind in a manner direct and almost irresistible, whereas objects of faith, though far superior in excellence and importance are overlooked and treated with heedless indifference. Naturally our souls cleave to the dust, therefore while the things of the world are well observed, the doctrines of the gospel are but partially understood. And shall our acquaintance extend only to those things which are comparitively of very small consequence, while those which are infinitely important are passed over with indifference? This is an evil remidied in a great degree by hearing with attention.

WITHOUT attention no mind can be enlightened and no heart can be impressed. Why is it that many have set, for years under the powerful and distinguishing preaching of the word and are yet ignorant of its most important doctrines and duties? A moment's reflection will suggest inattention, as the cause of this barrenness of understanding. The same evil indulged by us, will produce the same effect. All the inattentive of every description must one day be deeply pained and dreadfully confounded at their stupidity. And who would not give a trifle to prevent, what he would give a thousand worlds to relieve! How peculiarly unsuitable, heinous, and heaven daring to set inattentive in the place where God's "honor dwelleth," where the infinite majesty and judge is holding special audience with his creatures and preparing them for the interesting scenes of eternity? What a mark of disrespect is it to be inattentive to men distinguished for excellenc of character and talents? But how much more to be regardless of the supreme God addressing himself to us on a subject of everlasting moment, and on which our eternal all is suspended?

IN the house of God, especially, every mind should be calm, contemplative and perfectly inquisitive for that knowledge which enriches the soul and qualifies us for heaven. Remember God is attentive and in earnest, in all his calls and instructions. That eye which is ever wakeful, is constantly fixed on all who assay to come before him. The glorified in the courts of heaven are at an infinite remove from the lowest degree of inattention. And shall this characterize any one of those on earth to whom the blessed tidings of life and immortality are communicated? The truths dispensed by the faithful ministers of Jesus, are the price of his blood, and it is crucifying him afresh, to deafen our ears against the heavenly melody. Are we not under the necessity of approbating those ancient worthies who heard and received the word with all readiness, and can we exculpate ourselves for listless indifference? How many thousands under the preaching of Peter were savingly enlightened, and are now in glory? And shall the Lord be denied by us, the use of the ear which he himself hath planted and the understanding which he hath given? A person might with less egregious folly be inattentive while his houses were consuming in flames, or his friends languishing in death, than to be inattentive to the voice of God in his sanctuary. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty"—Spiritual poverty, and eternal death. "Take heed, therefore how and what you hear." S.

REDEEMING THE TIME.

THE general meaning of these words may be expressed by the following paraphrase. *Save as much time as possible for the best purposes. Buy the fleeting moments out of the hands of sin and Satan, of sloth, pleasure, and worldly business; and use them for God.* But only one particular way of redeeming time will now be considered, that is, *contracting to a proper degree the time of sleep.* This has been too little regarded. Many, who are conscientious in other respects, are not so in this. They seem to think it a matter of indifference, whether they sleep more or less. Let us, then, attend to this important branch of Christian temperance; What is it to redeem time from sleep? It is to take only that quantity of sleep, which nature re-

quires, and which is most conducive to health of body, and vigour of mind. It is allowed, that one quantity is not suited to all. Bishop Taylor has assigned, for the general standard, only *three hours* in twenty four. Baxter supposes, that *four hours* will suffice. But the best observation teaches, that, in general, the human body can scarcely continue in health and vigour without *six hours*. This, it is thought, may be properly considered, as the common standard.

But one and an other may say; "why so particular, and scrupulous? what harm is there in lying from ten to six or seven in summer, and from ten to eight or nine in winter, as most of my neighbors do?" But consider, candid reader; if you daily spend in sleep only one hour more, than nature requires, you throw away seven hours every week, which would amount to more than fifteen whole days in a year. If you live to the age of fifty, this waste of time would be seven hundred and fifty days, or making allowance for the usual sleep, about a thousand days. What an injury to your wordly substance! How much might you do in this time to promote your temporal advantage! How much might you do for the benefit of others!

Spending unnecessary time in sleep is injurous to health, especially in persons who are subject to nervous complaints. The great benefit which health receives from early rising, may be illustrated by the following instance. A young person was reduced to so low a condition, as to require assistance in walking across the room. Supposing it necessary in her enfeebled state, she often slept eight or nine hours, to the great damage of her health. Meeting some observations on early rising, she was induced to make the trial. By rising one quarter of an hour earlier every morning, she soon lessened the time of sleep to six hours. By persevering in this practice, and in other suitable methods, her strength gradually increased; her complaints, which had long bafiled medical skill, subsided, and health returned.

How injurous to the soul, as well as to the body, is needless sleep. Such a waste of precious time is surely a great sin against God. How much benefit might we derive from a right use of the time, which some waste in sleep! "I take it for granted, (says Mr. Law) that every Christian, who is in health, is up early in the morning. We censure the man, who is in bed, when he should be at his labour. Let this teach us, how odious we must appear in God's sight, if we be in bed, shut up in sleep, when we should be praising God, and are such slaves to drowsiness, as to neglect our devotions for it." Did not our blessed Lord use to pray early? Was not devout Anna day and night in the temple? Did not the primitive Christians esteem it a sacred duty to be seasonable in their devotions? If you waste unnecessary hours in sleep, and so abridge or prevent your religious exercises; is it not a symptom of a carnal temper, and a dangerous state? Does it not indicate, that you are not under the influence of that lively, zealous, and watchful spirit, which appeared in Christ, and is necessary to the comfort and usefulness of his followers? Let these thoughts rouse you. Shake off sloth and duiness. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and call upon the name of Christ, and he shall give thee light." And to prevent your ever indulging again in needless sleep, solemnly consider, how precious time will appear when your last day arrives, and how earnestly you will then de-

sire those hours and days, which have been wasted in guilty slumber.

(Panoplist.)

ANECDOTE OF JOHN KEPLER.

If any man can seriously believe that chance may have conducted things with all this regularity for so many ages, he would do well to repeat honest Kepler's experiment. John Kepler was a plain man of good natural understanding, and the best acquainted with the structure of the universe of any of his day. He was very unwilling to believe that chance had built it, though chance had then many zealous advocates, who loudly contended that the whole honor of the work belonged to that blind divinity. To give the question a fair discussion, he resolved to try whether chance could do a much more simple thing, with the letters that compose John Kepler's name, in Greek. He wrote these ten letters upon ten slips of paper; these he rolled carfully up, hustling them in a hat, and then drew them out one by one, to see whether, in repeated trials, they would come out in the required order. He continued his experiment until he was quite tired, without success. Indeed, according to the best computations I can make, chance was not likely to do right above one time in 163,459,296,000. The fortuitous concourse of atoms has had many a more serious answer, but never had a better one.

De Stella Nov. in ped. Serp.

OBITUARY.

Died, in Williamstown (Mass.) on the 13th inst. after a most severe and distressing illness of seventeen days, the Rev. Seth Swift, Minister of the Congregational Church in that place. The funeral was attended the Sabbath following by a crowded assembly. A very solemn and moving discourse was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Daniel Collins, of Lanesborough. Not only an afflicted family, but the whole town were in mourning and manifested the tenderest sensibility under the loss they had sustained. Considering the high estimation in which Mr. Swift was held by his church and people, as a christian and Minister of Christ, the circumstances were inexpressibly affecting. Their attachment was at this time, peculiar. Mr. Swift's labors during the year past had been wonderfully blessed in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and not less than one hundred and thirty persons, if I am correctly informed, had been added to the church. A more full account than what is here given, may be expected in some future number, when the particulars shall be better known.

In reviewing my tender years, I well remember what pleasure I then took in reading Poetry, composed for the use of children, how easily I committed it to memory, and how long I retained the ideas it conveyed. Supposing pieces of the same kind may have a like effect on children now; I send you the underwritten, which if better matter is not presented, you are at liberty to publish.

The Young Child's Prayer.

Jesus thou God, of truth and love,
Dearest of all the names above,

Before thy throne high-angels fall,
And own the sovereign Lord of all.

To thee the infant prayer I raise,
And bless thy name with songs of
praise,
May my devotion ardent rise,
Like gr[illegible]ful incense to the skies.

Accept the offering that I bring,
My God, my Saviour, and my King,
And may the watery tear I shed,
Flow from my heart, as well as head.

By thy creating hand my soul,
Was form'd with all its powers in full,
By thee my body from the dust,
With all its members rose at first.

In me thou form'dst the vital part,
And gavest motion to my heart,
Thou did'st my hands with sinews
string,
And form'd my tongue thy praise to
sing.

When I an helpless infant lay,
Thou did'st thy care extend each day,
My num'rous wants supply'd by thee,
Proclaim thy power and love to me.

My parents dear with tender heart,
Were mov'd by thee to act the part,
Thy sacred law on them enjoin'd,
Which love with duty hast combin'd.

Thy wisdom and almighty power,
Hast kept me from my natal hour,
From ills around on every side,
Hast been a sure unerring guide.

When fatal pestilence around,
With infants has bestrew'd the
ground,
Thou hast preserv'd and kept my
breath,
And sav'd me from the jaws of death.

Before my eyes thou hast display'd,
Those beauties which creation made,
The sun with all his heat and light,
And star[illegible]hich twin[illegible]in t[illegible]ight.

For me the fragrant flower is made,
With all its tints of light and shade,
Its beauty does my eye behold,
Its wond'rous sweetness can't be told.

Through all thy works does wisdom
shine.
And all proclaims a power divine,
They teach my infant tongue to raise
A sacred song of grateful praise.

By thy good providence in part,
I've learn'd the great important art,
Of letters to each other join'd,
To read and edify the mind.

In consequence of this in youth,
I've learn'd to read the page of truth,
That holy book thy sacred word,
Seal'd with the blood of Christ my
Lord.

By this I learn what God has done,
To save my soul by christ his son,
To wash me from my guilt and sin,
And form my heart anew within.

Lord when I view thy mercies all.
Before thy face I humbly fall,
And pray my sins may be forgiv'n,
And by thy grace be led to heav'n.

Wilt thou to me thy truths impart,

And write thy laws upon my heart,
Keep me from sin and ev'ry ill,
And from myself preserve me still.

Teach me to love my parents dear,
And all my relatives most near,
To pay the due of God above,
And as myself my neighbor love.

And as to manhood I advance,
May I not live by giddy chance,
But form my conduct by the word,
Of him who is the sov'reign Lord.

In all I say, in all I think,
In all I eat, in all I drink,
In all may I forever try,
Thy holy name to glorify.

Thus may my life pass smoothly on,
In works of labor said or done,
Which may to others useful prove,
And be a test of holy love.

In all the busy scenes of life,
O may it be my constant strife,
To be approv'd of thee my Lord,
And guided by thy holy word.

And when old age, all nation's doom,
Shall fit my body for the tomb,
And death's cold hand shall on me seize,
And all the vital current freeze.

May guardian angels round me stand,
Commissioned by thy dread command,
My soul to take in arms of love,
And bear me to the world above.

There may I see thy blissful face,
And triumph in redeeming grace,
May I be perfect in thy sight,
And stand among the saints in light.

There with an angel's heart and tongue,
I shall begin the heavenly song,
With kindred spirits I shall sing,
The triumph of the heavenly king.

To him who wash'd me in his blood,
And made me king, and priest, to God,
To him be honor, glory, praise,
Through length of everlasting days.

HINT TO PERSONS WHO COME LATE TO WORSHIP.

A WOMAN, who always used to attend public worship with great punctuality, and took care to be in time, was asked, How it was she could always come so early? She answered, very wisely, that it was a part of her religion not to disturb the religion of others.

Buck's Anecdotes.

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